

**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL JURISDICTION MEETING OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
October 22, 2003**

The local jurisdiction meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission was called to order at 8:30 a.m., on October 22, 2003, at the Red Lion Hotel, Canal/Marine Conference Room, 3073 Bucklin Hill Road, Silverdale, Washington.

Commissioners present were: Chair Aubrey Davis, Chris Marr, Ed Barnes, Elmira Forner Michele Maher, George Kargianis, Connie Niva and Dan O'Neal.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Davis opened the meeting with introductions around the table. Mayor Cary Bozeman, City of Bremerton, welcomed the Commission and meeting participants. He commented briefly regarding economic development in Kitsap County and shared his views of the upcoming ballot initiative for passenger only ferry service and the impact that it would have on the local economy.

RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS THE SOUND

Patty Lent, Kitsap County Commissioner, pointed out that the County has grown economically and transportation infrastructure plays an important role in growth planning. She commented that the Burley-Olalla interchange should be included as part of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge project. As the project progresses she hopes that the interchange will be included in the project.

Mayor Darlene Kordonowy, Bainbridge Island, emphasized that Kitsap County is looking to the future. The transportation corridor between North Poulsbo and the ferry dock on Bainbridge Island is critical. She looks forward to working with Kitsap Transit to create an efficient corridor.

Walter Elliott, Kingston Citizen Advisory Board, commented that Kingston is interested in finding a way to solve traffic congestion created on local highways as a result of ferry service cuts.

Chris Endresen, Kitsap County Commissioner, stated that the relationship between Kitsap County and the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is under discussion. Residents are concerned whether or not the county should be its own metropolitan planning organization or join with Clallam, Jefferson and Mason Counties. Kitsap County is tied with the other side of Puget Sound because of ferries, the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, the Naval base and Todd Shipyard. The community looks forward to bridging Puget Sound to benefit residents and promote businesses in Kitsap County.

Alice Tawresey, Chair, Tariff Policy Committee, shared that the mission statement and goals of the Marine Transportation Association of Kitsap County is to promote seamless, rider-oriented and environmentally sensitive marine transportation between Kitsap and other Puget Sound ports. She explained that the Wake Review Council has been formed to support the objective of disseminating wake research information and advocate for an environmentally sound high-speed ferry vessel. The Passenger-Only Ferry Program Council will provide a forum for development of robust passenger-only ferry service, and will lead the organization's efforts to accomplish this objective. The Bremerton Transportation Center Management Council oversees development and operation of the Bremerton Transportation Center, and will explore opportunities for future development and shared operation of similar facilities at other Puget Sound ports.

Dick Hayes, Executive Director, Kitsap Transit, stated that the Bremerton Transportation Center plan would create an elaborate full-scale passenger ferry facility that would produce a number of ferries arriving in Seattle. King County may join as a collaborative partner in this plan.

Mayor Cary Bozeman, City of Bremerton, emphasized that Seattle should utilize ferries as a tourist opportunity. He stated that a partnership with Seattle would be a valuable asset to Puget Sound communities.

Steve Anderson, Executive Director, Naval Station Shipyard and IMF, explained that the Navy is the largest employer in Kitsap County. The naval station depends on private contractors for services, and recent changes in ferry schedules have impacted the service level to the local community and shipyard causing employees to find alternative modes of transportation.

Commander Marci Pinkerton, Bremerton Naval Station, stated that current ferry service does not meet the needs of the Navy or the community. In order to meet these needs the Navy is leasing fast passenger-only ferries to transport crew and service members. She explained that approximately one-third of the ship's crewmembers commute daily between Everett and Kitsap County. Service members make the same commute as well.

Mayor Darlene Kordonowy, City of Bainbridge Island, shared her concerns regarding an increase in traffic capacity on Hwy 305 as a result of the elimination of passenger-only ferry service. Hwy 305 is a major route in the area and widening will not been considered until parity can be reached. Bainbridge Island recognizes the need to examine major highway improvements when considering their transportation plan.

Chris Endresen, Kitsap County Commissioner, commented that ferry routes in the area are not balanced, which results in a lack of parity.

Representative Beverly Woods commented that she is convinced people would

take the Bremerton ferry if the schedule were constant. The Bremerton route has been cut numerous times and has caused people to find alternate routes. The impact of increased traffic on highways in the area has created safety risks. She would like to see Puget Sound Regional Council take a closer look at ferry services.

Senator Betti Sheldon commented that Kitsap County is a wonderful place to live and has great possibilities for small businesses, but there is a transportation need, in particular, passenger-only ferry service. The area is ready to move forward with a plan that will enhance both sides of the sound. The water has so many possibilities to move people.

Representative Phil Rockefeller stated that there are strategic Navy facilities in the area that play a major role in national defense. Transportation is critical for the workforce of the bases and is directly tied to the economic future of the area. The transportation system is inefficient and water based transportation solutions are critical.

Representative Lois McMahan commented on the dangers of the Burley-Olalla intersection. For the revitalization of Bremerton and economic development of the county it is necessary to have dependable ferry service.

Rick Olson, Director of Governmental Relations and Communications, Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), stated that PSRC understands relationships across the Sound. Both sides of the Sound are joined economically and the military base is vital to the economy. There is growing interest in King County to work on the ferry issues, as well as other issues in a more regional way.

Mike Thorne, CEO, Washington State Ferries, stated that tough choices were made relative to ferry service levels with the goal being to re-capitalize the fleet. The desire to move forward has resulted in the current decisions. He described ridership trends from the 1950s and 1960s in comparison to the current trends.

Representative Phil Rockefeller commented that there should be a well articulated vision and an examination of all state resources. The Commission should be an active voice in the Department's performance and accountability.

Commissioners and meeting participants discussed transportation alternatives in the area and the state as a whole.

Chair Davis commented that as a result of Initiative 695 accumulated funding of \$100 million in reserve for passenger-only ferries that was taken away as a result of Initiative 695.

Representative Lois McMahan commented that solutions other than ferries should be considered.

Mayor Cary Bozeman, City of Bremerton, commented that leadership in Kitsap County has come together and are working towards a vision for the future.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE

Bremerton/Port of Bremerton Redevelopment

Senator Betti Sheldon shared that Kitsap County offers exciting economic development opportunities. Bremerton's peninsula location requires consideration of all options for future planning.

Dick Hayes, Executive Director, Kitsap Transit, commented that there is an emphasis on the development and revitalization of downtown Bremerton.

Steve Anderson, Executive Director, Naval Shipyard and IMF, stated that it is critical that the city cooperate in making downtown Bremerton accessible from the base. There has been a large quantity of parking spaces lost on the base as a result of security considerations. A 1000-space parking garage has been authorized for construction.

Commander Marci Pinkerton, Bremerton Naval Station, stated that additional facilities are being built on site. The Navy is considering locating additional training facilities in the Pacific Northwest. She commented that they are very proud of Pier Delta, their new aircraft carrier pier that allows for easier loading to the ships.

Jan Angel, Kitsap County Commissioner, commented that if South Kitsap industrial areas were developed, it would benefit the county economically. She feels that regulations and restrictions have gotten to the point that development has become difficult.

Kenneth Attebery, CEO, Port of Bremerton, stated that Bremerton National Airport has an opportunity to excel. Access to the area is critical and improvement to SR 3 will affect the future success of Kitsap County in terms of jobs.

John Sibold, Director, WSDOT Aviation, stated that aviation plays a critical role in the state's transportation system. Small communities often do not see the value of their airports. An airport's value will increase in the future as an area grows. Airports and access to them is an important part of the transportation system and must also be thought of in terms of regional freight options and as a vital link to medical facilities. He shared that the Department, through the RTPO process, will be working with communities to discuss airports of statewide significance.

Kitsap County Redevelopment Issues

Chris Endresen, Kitsap County Commissioner, stated that Kitsap County has a diverse workforce mostly as a result of the military. There have been discussions with Clallam and Jefferson Counties regarding business clusters such as marine and tourism. The Navy plays an important role in the economic future of the county.

Kathryn Quade, Councilmember, City of Poulsbo, commented that widening Highway 305 is the most pressing issue at this time, although it is a short-term solution. There has been a tremendous increase in traffic as a result of the cuts to the Bremerton ferry run. They are looking at alternative solutions.

Mary McClure, Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council, commented regarding planning, growth management and transportation. Kitsap County has moved into a progress approach to recognizing the links between land use and transportation planning. The Council is taking into consideration the relationship of urban growth areas in relationship to transportation dollars. The county is not struggling against growth management as much as it was a decade ago.

Chair Davis distributed a letter from Jeff Peacock, resident of Port Orchard. Mr. Peacock shared his concerns regarding the Burley-Olalla Interchange.

Patty Lent, Kitsap County Commissioner, commented that she believes that a portion of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge project funding should be applied to the Burley-Olalla Interchange in order to provide an earlier construction date.

Randy Hain, Region Administrator, Olympic Region, explained that the SR 16/Burley- Olalla Interchange project funding would be available to begin construction in 2010. In the interim, the Department will make safety improvements to the intersection beginning in 2004. It is premature to consider that Tacoma Narrows Bridge funds could be utilized for other projects.

Paula Hammond, Chief of Staff, WSDOT, explained that the Department is working with the Legislature to determine how best to deliver the Nickel projects.

Secretary MacDonald, WSDOT, commented that the Department and Legislature are working closely together on the Nickel project list.

Blaine Highfield, Co-Chair, Central Kitsap County Council, commented that the county needs more family wage jobs. Transportation is a critical part of the county's economic development. Moving people and freight are the primary concerns for Kitsap County.

David Porter, Kitsap County Economic Development Council, stated that it is important to the community to have family wage jobs and a great quality of life. Transportation infrastructure attracts businesses to an area.

RURAL CONNECTIONS

Mary McClure, Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council, explained that Kitsap County is a crossroads county and the gateway to the Olympic Peninsula. Major thoroughfares are critical to the area's economy. She briefly commented regarding Highways of Statewide Significance funding.

Mike Short and Mike Chapman, Councilmembers, Peninsula RTPPO Executive Board, expressed their appreciation for the Tacoma Narrows Bridge and Hood Canal Bridge projects. Mr. Short commented regarding the increased traffic to Hwy 305 and other highways in the area as a result of ferry cuts.

Representative Lois McMahan, commented regarding the safety issues surrounding the Burley-Olalla Interchange. Businesses are stating that they do not want to locate in Kitsap County because of the problems with moving goods. SR 16 plays a major role in the area as the link to Fort Lewis, naval bases and businesses. She stated that she plans to introduce legislation to cut WSDOT programs to fund the Burley-Olalla Interchange. She commented briefly regarding alternative solutions for transportation needs in the area.

PUBLIC AND LEGISLATOR COMMENT PERIOD

Paul Locke, citizen, shared his concerns regarding transit funding and the Washington State Patrol emphasis patrols slowing down traffic.

Diane Smart, Co-Chair, Bremerton Ferry Advisory Committee, commented that she feels the Kitsap Peninsula is isolated and there should be dependable transit and ferry service.

Kevin Wirth, resident of Olalla, shared his concerns with public safety and traffic accidents at the Burley-Olalla Interchange.

Tish Culp, resident of Olalla, commented that the Burley-Olalla Interchange is a key access to the Olympic Peninsula. She does not support a temporary fix to the interchange.

Jay Spady, resident of Port Orchard, shared his view that funding for the Burley-Olalla Interchange has consistently gone to other projects.

Al O'Brien, Fisc Transportation, commented that he has concerns with closure of the Hood Canal Bridge and the effect that it would have on his company.

Jim Martin, CSTC, commented regarding the impact that the transportation system has on moving goods and providing services.

Gene Hart, resident of Bremerton, shared his concerns regarding public safety.

Chuck Shank, commented that it is time to consider the transportation infrastructure.

Randy Boss, Cross Sound Transportation Coalition, stated that he plans to give a presentation at a future Commission meeting regarding submerged tunnels and a highrise suspension bridge from Vashon to Kitsap County.

Stan Stagerberg, resident of Poulsbo, commented that he would like to see a bridge between Bainbridge Island and East Bremerton.

Bernie Buday, resident of Olalla, commented that he feels the Burley-Olalla Interchange is a public safety hazard.

George Larson, citizen, shared his concerns regarding the safety of the Burley-Olalla Interchange.

John Burkhardt, resident of Olalla, shared his concerns regarding safety hazards at the Burley-Olalla Interchange.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m. on October 22, 2003